

Chant, Clarence Augustus

Oct.-Dec. 1916

(56)

561
October 28th, 1916

Professor C. A. Chant,
University of Toronto.

Dear Professor Chant:

Many thanks for your kindness in sending me
the two copies of "The Journal of the Royal Astronomical Society".
I will endeavour to glance through the points to which you refer, and
am glad to have Professor Lowell's address.

I congratulate you on the appearance of the
journal.

Yours sincerely,

President.



447
December 6, 1916

Dear President Falconer,

I have to-day made application to the Superintendent to have a branch line run into my office from one of the telephones in the Physics Building. I enclose herewith a copy of my letter to him. In it I give some reasons for my request.

The present condition of affairs is extremely unsatisfactory. To reach either telephone requires considerable time and causes much inconvenience and the actual time lost in making and answering calls, through the inconvenience, is certainly of much greater value than the cost of the addition asked for.

I may say that Dr. McLennan's office is only a few feet from the office of his department and yet he has a branch line. I have no objection to raise; it is probably worth while; but it surely makes my request reasonable.

Let me assure you that I do not ask for this on account of personal business, as I have practically no business relations down town; it is simply that I may do my work more effectively.

I think the University should bear the expense of this, but rather than see it refused I would be willing to pay half the cost.

Very sincerely yours

President Falconer,

Univ. of Toronto.

C. A. B. Hunt

Did Prof. Lings agree to the proposal?

Copy

December 6, 1916

G. Campbell, Esq.,

Superintendent.

Dear Mr. Campbell,

I desire hereby to ^{apply to} have a branch telephone line run into my office.

As you know, there are two telephones in the Physics Building. One is upstairs at the end of a long corridor in the office of the Department of Physics. It is very inconvenient, both with respect to location and to time consumed in reaching it from my office. The other telephone is down in the basement. This is also inconvenient to reach and in addition is in a very noisy place.

My work requires a considerable use of the telephone. Among other things, I have to arrange from day to day with my assistant at the Meteorological Office regarding observations made there by the students. But besides I have to answer and to make numerous calls in carrying on my work.

The value of the time lost through the present inconvenient arrangement is altogether beyond the cost of the installation asked for, which I understand would be \$22 a year.

Very sincerely yours

[Signed] C. A. Chant

65

The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada.

The Dominion Grant.

About ten years ago the Dominion Government made an annual *grant* to the Royal Astronomical Society to be used in publishing a Journal devoted to the advancement of science in Canada. The Journal has been published ever since and has been a distinguished success. It is the only purely scientific journal published in Canada. Nobody's personal interests are served in it. Neither the Editors (Professor Cahnt of the University of Toronto, Dr. Plaskett of the Dominion Observatory, Ottawa, and Sir Frederic Stupart of the Meteorological Service of the Dominion) nor the contributors receive any remuneration whatever for this work.

Besides spreading among our own people a knowledge of what is being done in scientific matters, much comment has been aroused and a general recognition given to our Dominion by the scientific world abroad. While an account of the work done in our Dominion Observatory may be printed in Government reports, all that is of general interest is presented in a less technical form in the Journal, in which have appeared also many other original contributions relating to science both in Canada and elsewhere.

Many of the contributions appearing in the Journal have been reprinted or quoted in Great Britain, the United States, Russia, France, Italy, Spain, Mexico, etc., frequently being translated into the languages of those countries. There is hardly a learned society or *important* library in the world that does not give it an honorable place among its exchanges. As evidence of this statement may be quoted a work entitled "Astronomy" by Arthur Hinks, Professor of Astronomy in Gresham College, London, and published by Williams and Morgate, London:

"To keep abreast with recent work, the student must refer to the periodicalsThe Journal of the British Astronomical Association, The Publications of the Astronomical Society of the Pacific, and The Journal of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada".

It is not too much to suggest that the Journal published by the Royal Astronomical Society is doing as much as any other agency in the Dominion to give Canada her rightful place in the scientific sisterhood of nations. This service is made possible by the grant to the Society for the purpose. Those who have a grasp of the situation and are therefore in a position to form a just opinion, believe that no public money brings more substantial returns both to the honour and the international repute of our Dominion.

The Society is national in the broadest sense. Of the 500 members (located in Halifax, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Winnipeg, Regina, Victoria and other centres) over fifty are in overseas service, and some have fallen. Several of the general officers are in khaki. The Society has supplied telescopes to Canadian troops at the front, and usefulness has been recognised and acknowledged in a letter from Col. Lockhart Gordon, dated "Somewhere in France".

In view of these facts, the dismay of the Society will be appreciated when notification was received from the Dominion Department of Finance that the usual grant of \$2000 would not appear in the Estimates for the year 1917-18. The reason given is a desire to economise for the better prosecution of the war.

We believe that the Society is furthering the same aims and ideals as those for which the Empire is contending on the great battlefields of the world. Any action which would prevent the publication of the Journal would, we feel, stultify the commendable action of the Government by which they have created at a great prospective cost a Commission whose concern is with matters of reconstruction, especially

in relation to scientific conservation and economy.

The suppression of the Society's publications, even for one year would permit our enemies permanently to impair if not destroy whatever scientific prestige our Dominion has heretofore achieved. The great scientists of the United States and other neutral nations will conclude that we are nearing bankruptcy if a practical science, such as Astronomy now is, is to be crippled in this way.

Our boys in their maze of trenches have often no other means of determining relative positions than by recognition of familiar stars. Hundreds of lives have been lost to our Empire because her sons marched in a wrong direction when the recognition of a star would have saved them. In view of many such facts, any contention that Astronomy is not a practical science is absurd.

We feel sure that the elimination of the grant to the Society will not meet with your approval. We urge you, therefore, to use every possible influence properly to secure its reinstatement in the Estimates.

(Signed) Albert D. Watson,
President.

J.R. Collins,
General Secretary.

C.A. Chant,
Editor and Past President.

Toronto,
January 20, 1917

